

ADDRESS: 3701-15 CHESTNUT ST

Proposal: Construct addition

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: CSC Co-Living

Applicant: Matthew Huffman, ALMA architecture llc

History: 1970; International House; Bower & Fradley, architects

Individual Designation: 12/11/2020

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the final approval of the addition of a structure for retail use on the western section of the plaza at International House in University City. It also proposes to rehabilitate the eastern section of the plaza. The Historical Commission designated International House, a Modernist hi-rise, in December 2020. At the same meeting, the Historical Commission approved in concept the construction of the retail structure on the western section of the plaza. While the in-concept application approved in 2020 was not an explicit financial hardship application, the owner did argue that the International House building had several idiosyncrasies that would render its adaptive reuse expensive and difficult, and the retail structure would offset some of those expenses. The owner agreed not to oppose the designation in exchange for the Historical Commission's commitment that the retail structure as well as a rear addition would be approved. The Historical Commission indicated its commitment with the December 2020 in-concept approval, when it approved in concept a retail addition, provided it was limited to the western section of the plaza, to the west of the main entranceway. In June 2022, the Historical Commission approved a second in-concept application for the addition of the retail structure on the western section of the plaza. During that review, the Architectural Committee offered several suggestions for the improvement of the design, which the applicant implemented.

This application proposes the same design for the retail structure that the Historical Commission approved in concept in June 2022. The structure is designed to stand on its own, without any support from the historic building. Its construction will require no significant alterations to the historic building, allowing for it to be removed in the future and the historic building restored to its original condition. It will incorporate the existing concrete wall that runs along Chestnut Street and encloses the plaza. The front of the retail structure now steps down from the main roof height to the two-story glass box, to the one-story glass box, to the canopy over the entrance, referencing the terraced façade of the historic building. At the suggestion of the Architectural Committee, the applicant turned the entrance 90 degrees from the plaza to the street, lightened the color of the metal panels cladding the addition, and additional fenestration and articulation along Chestnut Street, and made other changes to improve the design.

SCOPE OF WORK

- Construct retail structure on western section of the plaza,
- Rehabilitate eastern section of the plaza.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new works shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with*

the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

- The new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property, satisfying Standard 9.
- The new construction will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment, satisfying Standard 9.
- *Standard 10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*
 - The new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired, satisfying Standard 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends approval, pursuant to Standards 9 and 10 and the Historical Commission's approvals in concept of December 2020 and June 2022.



6 June 2022

Historical Commission of Philadelphia
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Philadelphia, PA 19123
t. 215.564.1202

Property: 3701-17 Chestnut St. Philadelphia, PA
Owner: CSC Co-Living
6 St. Johns Lane, New York, NY 10013
Re: **Final Approval and to be placed on the
Historical Commission's Consent Agenda**

Given our client's endeavor to proceed through two separate Architectural Committee reviews on 12/03/2020 and 06/10/22, along with the incorporation of all feasible design input provided, Ownership respectfully requests project final approval and to be placed on the Historical Commission's consent agenda for July 8, 2022.

6/1/2022 Response to Arch Committee Submission

We would like to first thank the architectural committee and the historical commission for their time in the betterment of our project at 3701 Chestnut Street. The Historical Commission Architectural Committee provided guidance for our project last month on May 24. The committee voted to approve the design in concept with recommendations. Most of the recommendations are listed below along with the design team responses.

Chestnut Street metal facade panels color. The Architectural Committee felt the metal panels presented were too dark and would like to see them lighter in tone. The design team changed the design, so the metal panels are lighter in tone as shown in the enclosed revised rendered images.

Chestnut Street Main Retail Entrance. The Architectural Committee recommended that the main entry point into the retail space be oriented towards Chestnut Street instead of the IHP plaza. The design team relocated the main entry to Chestnut Street as shown in the revised plan & rendered images.

Lower glass box steps back from Chestnut Street. The Architectural Committee suggested to provide more space at the retail entry from the Chestnut Street sidewalk so that the lower glass box steps back from the property line. We have revised the design by pushing the lower glass box back 3ft from the property line to allow pedestrians room at the proposed Chestnut Street entrance as shown in the enclosed revised plan & rendered images.

Chestnut Street metal façade panels are broken down in scale. The Architectural Committee advised that the metal panel walls along Chestnut Street were massive and should be further articulated to break down the façade's scale. The design team revised the elevation by breaking down the large panels into smaller sections with a reveal to create a rhythm in the façade. Then, punched window openings were added in the exterior wall to introduce smaller scale elements. The punched windows are proportional in size to the window mullion divisions in the larger Chestnut Street curtain walls. These changes are shown in the enclosed revised plan & rendered images.

The green roof on the existing IHP awning. The Architectural Committee was not ready to approve plantings on the existing awning without additional details. The design team revised the project and removed the green roof on the existing awning as shown in the enclosed revised rendered courtyard image at this time.

Existing Site Plan. The Architectural Committee requested the design team add an existing conditions site plan so the Board can better understand the scope of



the changes being proposed. The design team added an existing site plan to the presentation.

Not attaching to IHP. The Architectural Committee suggested the proposed addition not attached to the existing IHP structure. The design team explained that a portion of the existing building's first floor will be used by the retailer. This allows for loading access to be kept on Ludlow Street, away from Chestnut St. The design team explained that no portion of the existing structure will be demolished so that someday, if desired, the proposed retail addition can be removed leaving the existing structure intact.

Too much glass on east facade. The Architectural Committee had concerns regarding the continuous glass curtain wall along the plaza. The design team has kept this façade as glass, as the intent is to create a lantern effect to help illuminate the existing plaza and be easily seen beyond the preserved concrete site walls. This glass wall will also allow for visibility between activated areas, provide a contrasting aesthetic to the adjacent heavy masonry building, and to create an inviting façade oriented towards the 37th Street Walkway pedestrian path.

5/10/2022 Submission

The 18,750 SF proposed 2-story addition will be located on the western portion of the existing plaza as previously discussed and approved by the historic board on 12/03/2020. This addition has been designed so no portion of the existing poured-in-place concrete exterior façade will be demolished. The addition will be erected adjacent to the existing building with a separate structure system and (for the most part) having only the 2nd floor balcony integrated into the proposed envelope (as shown in the typical detail wall section on page 6 of the presentation). The design strategy is such that if some day the addition is removed, and the full plaza is restored, the existing historic building will remain intact.

The design concept for the new addition is intended to contrast with the historic structure while also providing aesthetic continuity between the two buildings. Along the Chestnut Street corridor, the addition has pedestrian scale (larger than, but akin to brick or slate) dark grey metal panel wall cladding. These new walls overlap and integrate the existing concrete plaza wall which is being proposed to remain. These textural dark panels contrast the light, smooth, monolithic exposed concrete of the historic facade. The east façade facing the plaza is a continuous glass front with narrow dark metal horizontal lines, providing contrast with the historic brutalist structure which has inherently thick walls and solid columns constructed of concrete. The second floor at the east façade steps back from the lower floor, which echoes the cascading balconies of the International House and keeps the plaza more open to the sky. This helps to create similarly comfortable scales between the two buildings and the plaza's occupants. The addition "syncs up" to the historic building by aligning new horizontal architectural elements, such as the lower glass box roof matches the height of the mezzanine window head, and the lower box horizontal mullion aligns with the same window's sill, while the high glass box horizontal mullion aligns with the top of the existing balcony wall. Finally, an awning at the entrance to the addition provides another step down and an entrance marker on the plaza, keeping with the spirit of the deep entrance canopy into IHP and adding to the 'town square' type feeling of the plaza.

Design Concept for Plaza: The design of the International House entry courtyard acknowledges the existing design by retaining key elements while providing a fresh update that emphasizes connection to the surrounding context as well as increases the planted area for improved user comfort. The original design adhered to a grid that was used to guide the layout of the new site elements. By removing one section of the existing site wall, the main entry point on Chestnut Street is more open and inviting for both the retail and the residential building users. By leaving the remainder of the wall in place, the courtyard retains its sense of privacy and protection from the street. New tiered bench seating is proposed on the interior of the street wall to bring down its imposing scale and provide amphitheater-like seating. New planted areas would be cut into the existing



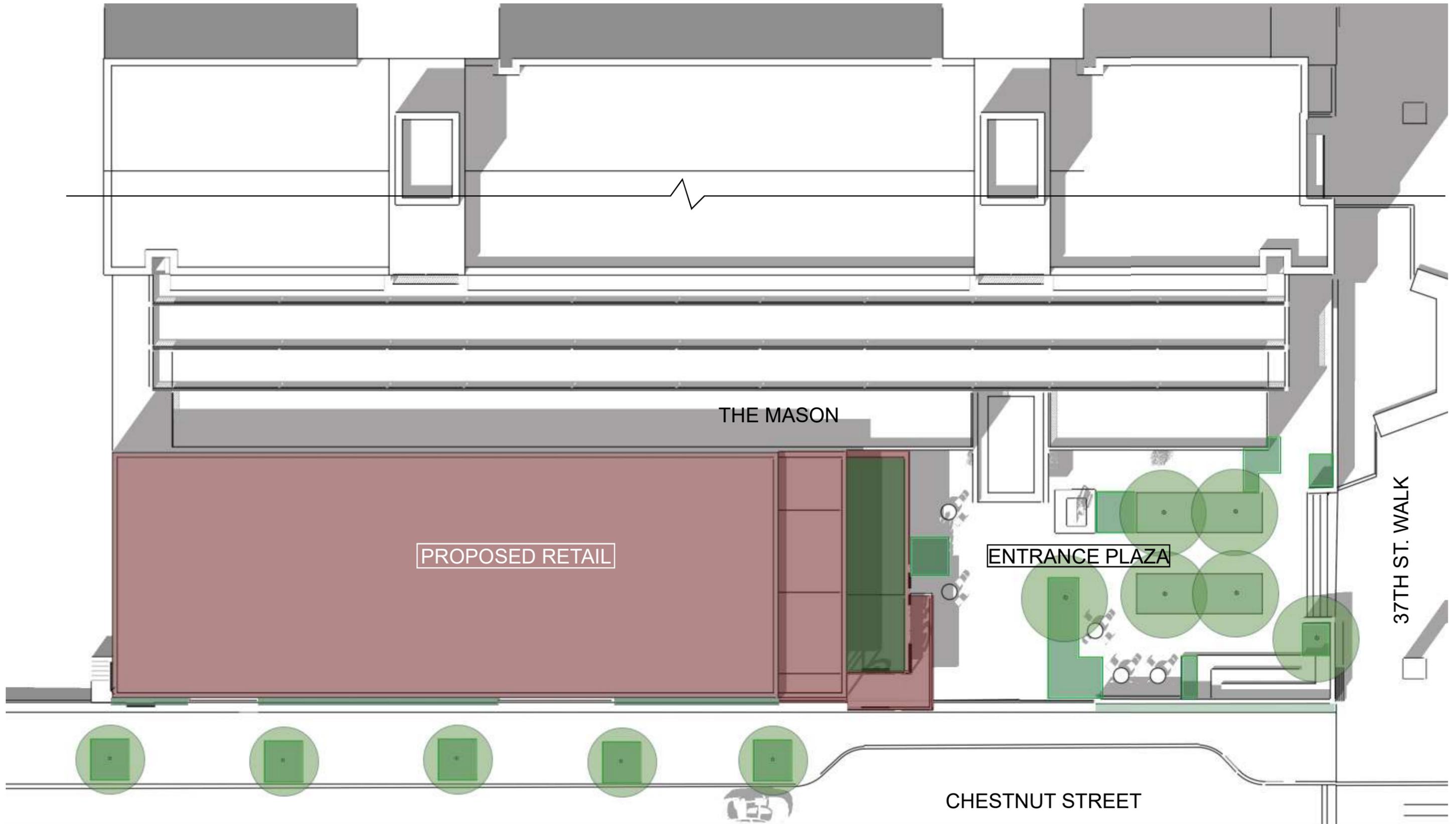
paving to delineate sitting areas and soften the largely hardscaped design with lush, native plantings. New planting areas will be added along Chestnut Street to soften the streetscape and a planter and bench are added to the 37th Street Walkway to emphasize connection to the surrounding context and activate underutilized areas. A removable green roof is added to the existing International House entrance canopy as well as two small stormwater planters at the base of the canopy in order capture stormwater that is currently directed onto the walking surface creating potentially hazardous winter conditions.

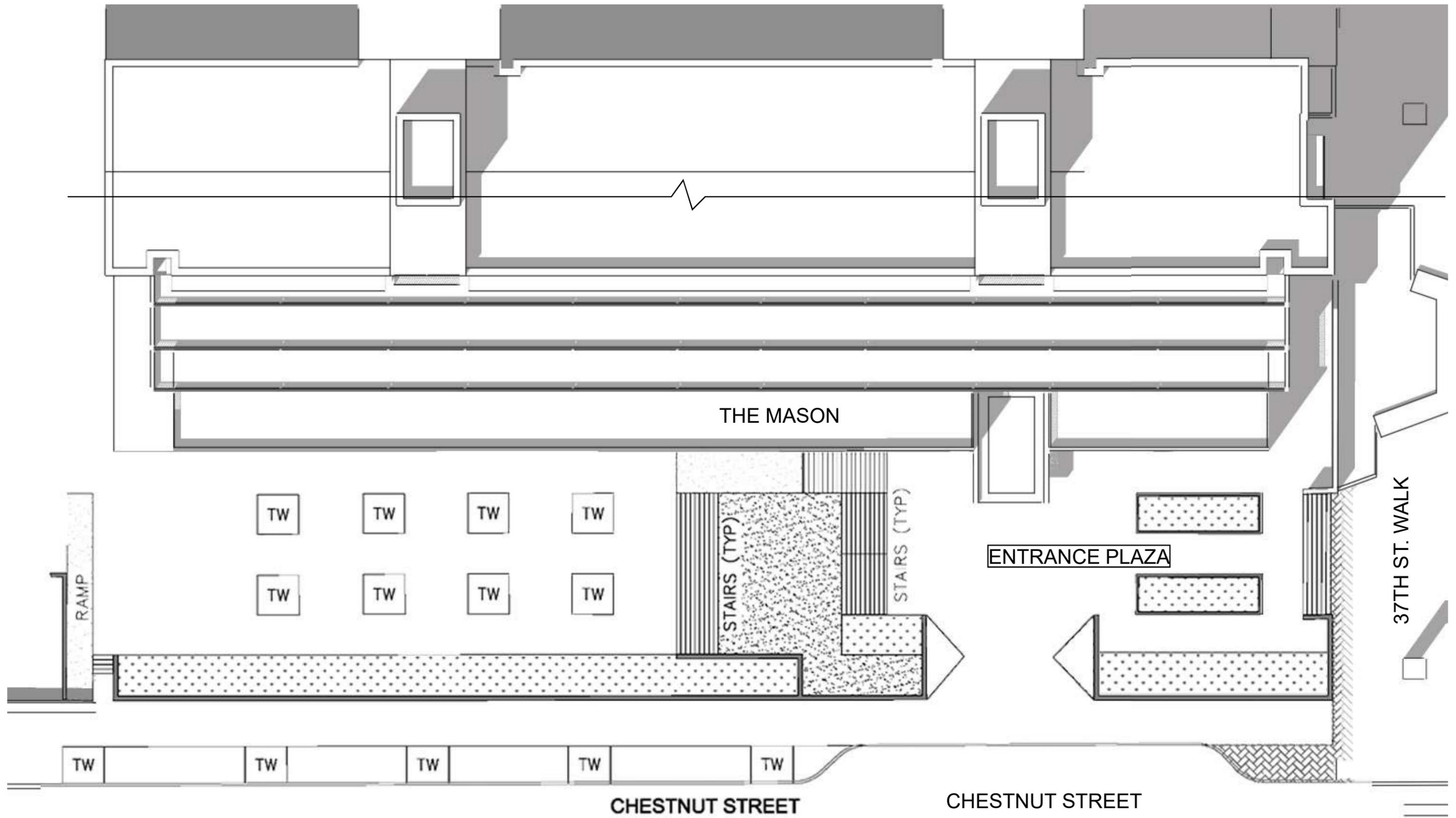
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'M' followed by several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Mathew Huffman, AIA
ALMA architecture llc











1 Panel



Inspiration

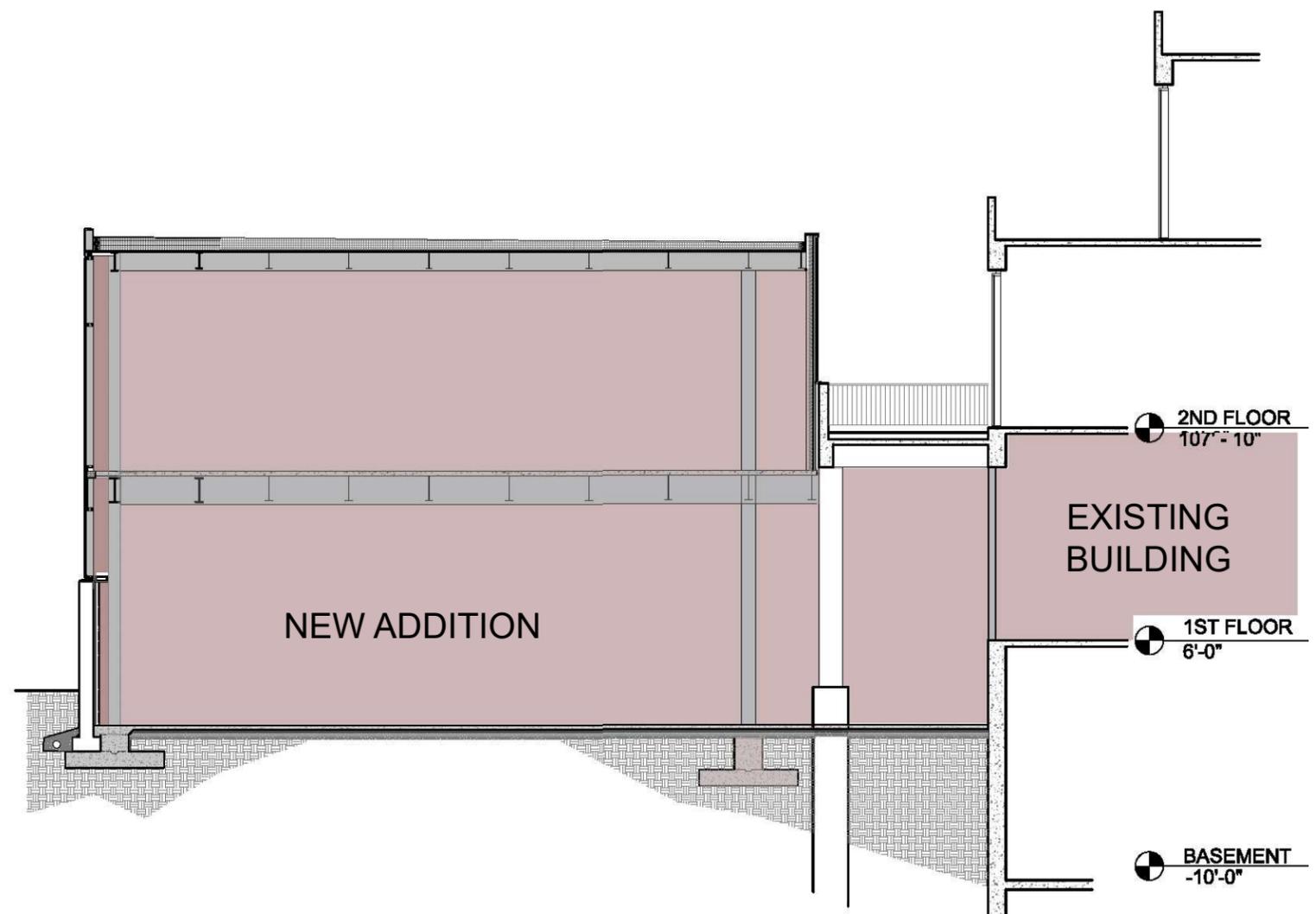




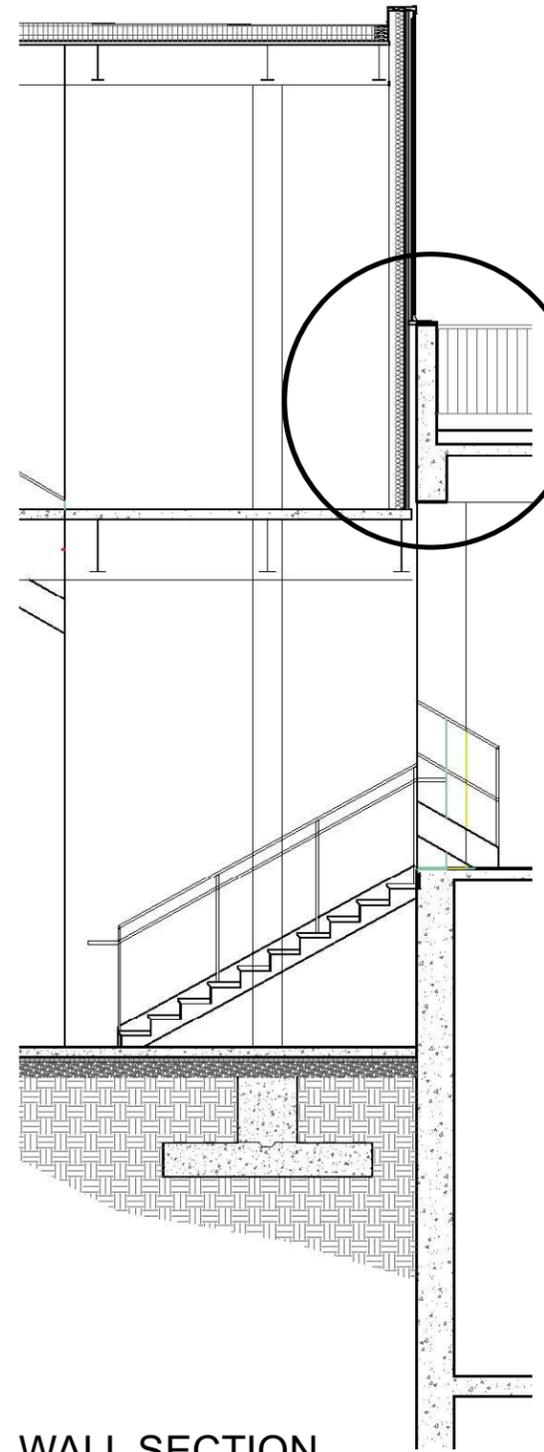
Roof - T.O. Slab
34'-0"

Level 2 - T.O. Slab
18'-0"

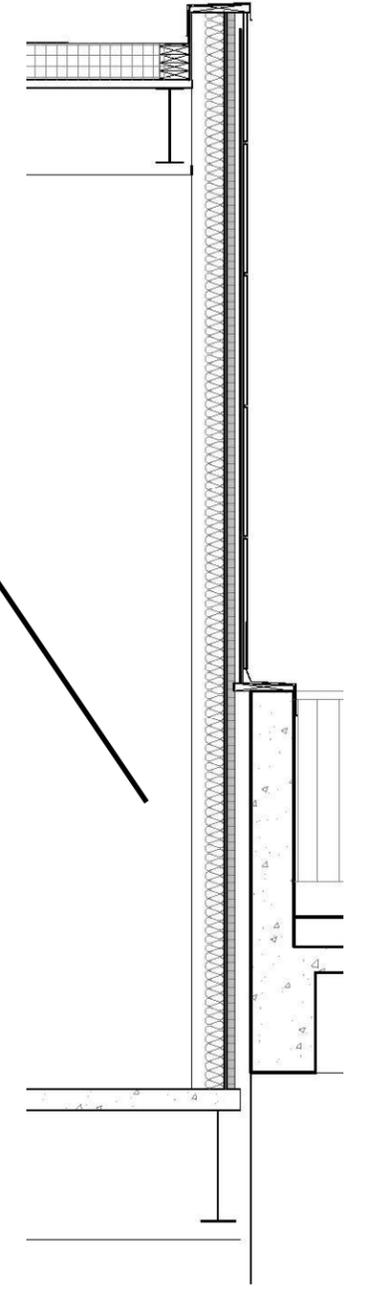
Level 1 - T.O. Slab
0'-0"



BUILDING SECTION



WALL SECTION



DETAIL SECTION